

Skills Matching and Opportunities in Wood Manufacturing

Evaluation Report

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Conference Board of Canada

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DATE: December 22, 2023



This report was produced as part of a project funded by the Future Skills Centre (FSC), with financial support from the Government of Canada's Future Skills Program.

FSC is a forward-thinking centre for research and collaboration dedicated to preparing Canadians for employment success. We believe Canadians should feel confident about the skills they have to succeed in a changing workforce. As a pan-Canadian community, we are collaborating to rigorously identify, test, measure, and share innovative approaches to assessing and developing the skills Canadians need to thrive in the days and years ahead. The Future Skills Centre was founded by a consortium whose members are Toronto Metropolitan University, Blueprint ADE, and The Conference Board of Canada

The opinions and interpretations in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Future Skills Centre or the Government of Canada.



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1.0 Introduction

Goss Gilroy Inc (GGI) is pleased to present this report, Skills Matching and Opportunities in Wood Manufacturing for the Wood Manufacturing Council (WMC) Project funded by the Future Skills Centre (FSC), in partnership with the Conference Board of Canada. GGI was engaged to conduct this evaluation by FSC and the Conference Board of Canada, in order to support their strategic evaluation and learning support initiatives, and job transitions and skills matching platform (OpportuNext) and initiatives.

This report outlines the background and context of WMC's skills matching project in the wood manufacturing sector. The purpose, scope, and objectives of this evaluation are highlighted in this introduction, along with this evaluation's methodology and approach. The results of the evaluation are presented in the findings section according to key evaluation questions and indicators. A brief summary of findings with recommendations concludes this evaluation report. The WMC Board Questionnaire (Appendix A) and WMC Partner Survey (Appendix B) are attached.

1.1 Background – Job Transitions and Skills Matching

The Conference Board of Canada highlighted in their 2021 publication “Modelling Job Transitions in Canada”¹ that Canadian workers, employers and policy-makers need to enhance the available information about worker education, skills and experiences given changing demographics, employment opportunities and occupational outlooks. The Conference Board has developed a way to identify potential job transitions for Canadian workers considering a career change. Canadians need a better sense of how to capitalize on their current skills education abilities, experience and knowledge. To this end they have developed a platform called OpportuNext that identifies prospective job transitions to other work opportunities, based on one's current skill set.²

Skills Matching

The skills matching (and education matching) is a comparison of the listed skills and competencies (and educational requirements) for the occupations that are part of the National Occupational Classification (NOC) database. It shows occupations which are comparable to those in other sectors and suggests where the industry might look for potential employees with transferable skills.³

¹ Conference Board of Canada (2021). Modelling Job Transitions in Canada: A primer.

² WMC (2023). Woodworking – Skills Matching. Developed for national trade magazines, August.

³ Ibid.

1.2 Purpose of the Skills Matching and Opportunities in Wood Manufacturing Project

WMC's Skills Matching and Opportunities in Wood Manufacturing project's main objective is to increase the awareness of the sector, its careers and the educational pathways to those careers for key target audiences, particularly underserved groups. The skills-matching project is designed to allow the sector to identify specific occupations in non-wood sectors for potential transition into the industry. In particular, it looks to move people from lower wage at-risk roles that require minimal re-skilling or upskilling into the sector.

It also allows WMC to develop formal recruiting material and deliver recruiting presentations in schools and at career fairs to expand awareness of the opportunities in the sector and to specifically target equity communities so their constituents may gain employment with sector firms. The focus of this project is to provide relevant career awareness materials to the small and medium-sized companies that they can use in their own recruiting efforts. These strategies are designed to build awareness and recruitment capacity within the sector.

Target Groups

Targets are those traditionally outside the wood manufacturing sector and from industries with transferable skills. Additionally, this program targets underemployed or at-risk Canadians, particularly:

- 1) **New Canadians:** newcomers to Canada, and immigrants and refugees eligible to work in Canada;
- 2) **Women:** especially those who may be concerned about joining a male-dominated sector or may not be aware of diverse opportunities in the sector such as non-production jobs like design, finishing, management, sales etc.; and
- 3) **Indigenous Communities:** who may not be aware of opportunities off-reserve, and in neighbouring communities, and who may believe they need credentials in order to start their careers. Prospects for urban-based Indigenous people in particular are very high.

1.3 Evaluation Objectives, Scope and Questions

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the relevance, effectiveness, partnerships and short-term impacts of the WMC Skills Matching and Opportunities in Wood Manufacturing project. The questions to be addressed in the evaluation are as follows:

Rationale

1. Is there a continued need for the WMC Skills Matching and Opportunities in Wood Manufacturing project?

Effectiveness & Impact

2. To what extent has this project been effective in creating a more coordinated approach to HR & promotion within/outside the sector?
 - a. What impact can the availability of a national recruiter have on the awareness of careers in the sector?
3. To what extent has the Skills Matching project been effective in targeting recruitment from industries with transferable skills?
 - a. What are the immediate impacts of this project in terms of skills matching and career awareness efforts?
4. How effective has WMC been in making diverse target groups aware of opportunities in the wood manufacturing sector?

Partnerships and Industry Needs

5. To what extent did WMC establish and develop partnerships with Industry partners; educators (HS and post-secondary) and employment agencies/career centres?
6. To what extent has this project improved sharing of WMC information and best practices among sector partners?
 - a. To what extent is WMC effectively identifying industry needs and best practices?
 - b. Are WMC HR products and services meeting industry needs to reach job seekers outside the sector?

Logic Model

Based on an initial review of program documentation and a working group session with WMC staff involved in the program, GGI developed the Logic Model for this study.

Logic Model Development

GGI hosted a working session to update the Logic Model in mid-June 2023. The logic model was reviewed by WMC staff. The logic model was updated from the original Results-Based Management and Accountability Framework (RMAF) prepared in 2011 using a number of information sources including the following:

- WMC Results based Management Accountability Framework (RMAF), 2011;
- WMC Quarterly Reports for FSC;
- Advanced Wood Manufacturing in Canada: 2015-16 Labour Market Information Update, Conference Board of Canada, June 2016;
- WMC project brochures; and,

- Website Materials: including resources on Essential Skills, Labour Market Information, National Occupational Standards (NOC) and Prior Learning and Assessment & Recognition (PLAR). [Wood Manufacturing Council \(WMC-cfb.ca\)](http://Wood Manufacturing Council (WMC-cfb.ca))

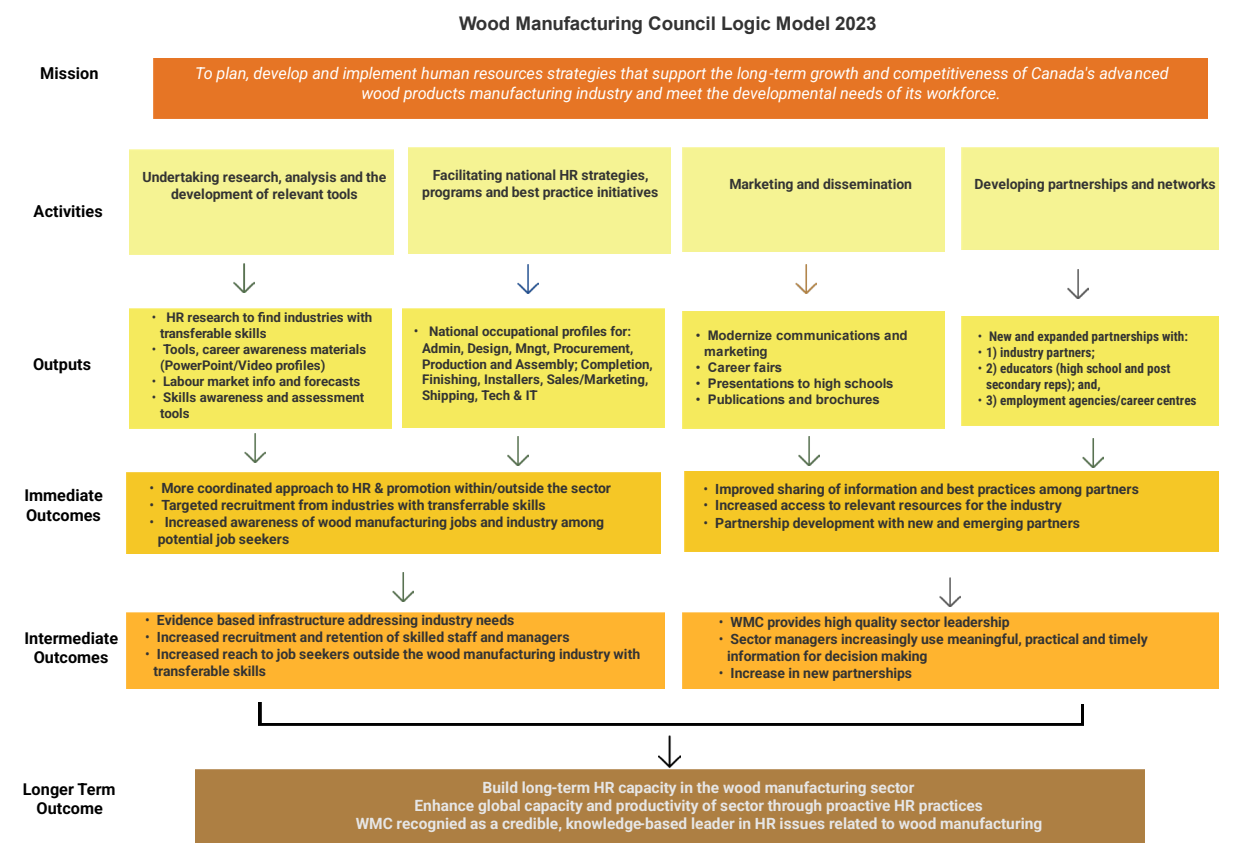
The WMC's logic model, in diagrammatic, and is presented below. The logic model is a graphical image of an organization's intentions. It defines the organizations intended activities, outputs and outcomes and shows the cause-and-effect chain between the program activities, outputs and outcomes. The logic model can also serve as a tool to obtain agreement on expected outcomes and provides a basis on which to devise the strategy to measure these outputs and outcomes. The logic model can be used as both a management tool and in communications with stakeholders.

The activities are the major actions and outputs undertaken by the organization and are divided into four core areas namely research on transferrable skills relevant to the industry, labour market analysis and developing relevant tools; facilitating national HR strategies, programs and best practice initiatives such as identifying NOC profiles for relevant industries; marketing and dissemination by modernizing communication materials and expanding outreach; and developing partnerships and networks with industry partners, educators and employment agencies. Examples of some of the activities include the development of relevant HR tools, and the development of partnerships and networks. Although activities are shown as four separate areas, in reality they often overlap and interact with each other. For example, in undertaking outreach, the WMC facilitates information sharing with the industry that informs the WMC's research initiatives.

Each activity area produces a number of outputs. These are the products that are directly produced by activities (e.g., services, products), as described above. Outputs can be counted – e.g., the number of reports produced by the WMC or the number of presentations and career fairs. The measurement of outputs is the easiest and most straightforward set of data that the WMC can collect in order to demonstrate its performance to stakeholders.

The next three layers of the logic model are the outcomes. The outcomes are the consequence of outputs, what the outputs are expected to achieve and why the WMC is undertaking the activities that it does. Outcomes can be influenced by both internal and external factors. They are normally shown as immediate outcomes, intermediate outcomes that can be achieved in one year, and long-term outcomes that are achieved over two or more years. While the WMC is focused on long-term, intermediate and immediate outcomes, the scope of this evaluation is limited to immediate outcomes.

Figure 1: Logic Model



2.0 Methodology

This section highlights GGI’s methodological approach to this project evaluation. This study took a participatory approach to data collection and analysis. Throughout the different phases of research – from the development of the evaluation framework to analysis and reporting – GGI consulted extensively with the WMC through a series of consultations for feedback on the evaluation. This included working sessions and meetings to develop the logic model, evaluation framework and tools, and during the analysis of findings.

Gender Based Analysis (GBA) Plus

This evaluation applied a Gender-based Analysis (GBA) Plus lens to the analysis, particularly when examining the potential impact of various strategies and approaches to reach diverse target groups and attract them to the sector. GBA Plus is an analytical process used to assess how diverse groups may experience policies, programs and initiatives differently based upon identity factors. The “plus” in GBA Plus acknowledges that intersecting identity factors such as for example, race, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, physical ability, and mental ability equally define one’s identity.⁴ A GBA Plus lens is designed to bring to light whether different root causes, needs, consequences, probabilities, access, or vulnerabilities may be at play depending on the identity or intersecting identities of participants.

GGI applied a GBA plus lens to provide an intersectional perspective on the diverse needs of workers in the Wood Manufacturing sector and implications for future research.

2.1 Data Collection Methods

This mixed-methods study used both qualitative and quantitative research methods as follows:

- **Document Review:** GGI conducted a targeted review of relevant documents and available data;
- **WMC Board Questionnaire:** Board members completed a self-administered questionnaire; and,
- **WMC Partner Survey:** the survey contained indicators that reflect the priorities of the WMC and engaged industry partners and key stakeholders such as post-secondary institutions.

⁴ The Government of Canada’s Gender Results Framework can be found online at this website: <https://cfc-swc.gc.ca/grf-crrg/index-en.html>.

Document Review

The document review provided background information on the origin and initial design of the project. The review of implementation documents provided key information to understand how the project was intended to operate, and how it was actually implemented. This line of evidence also answered evaluation questions on the relevance, effectiveness, partnerships and impacts of the WMC Skills Matching and Opportunities in Wood Manufacturing project.

In addition to key documents including the WMC project's proposal, project reports, as well as internal design documents were consulted. Key documents included: WMC Quarterly Reports; WMC Results-based Accountability Framework (RMAF), 2011; Advanced Wood Manufacturing in Canada: 2015-16 Labour Market Information Update, Conference Board of Canada, June 2016; WMC brochures; and, Website Materials. Literature was also consulted for the relevance section which included a brief review of current sector related labour market issues and gaps. These sources are highlighted at the end of this report on the Reference List.

Key Informants, WMC Board Questionnaire (n=7)

In addition to the document review, GGI also conducted a WMC Board Questionnaire. For this evaluation, the WMC opted for a self-administered WMC Board Questionnaire based on a key informant interview guide. The self-administered questionnaire captured perceptions, opinions, experiences, examples, and factual information with respect to most evaluation issues and questions.

Respondents to the WMC Board Questionnaire are referred to in this report as Key Informants. The rationale for choosing this methodology was for ease during summer months and improving response rates. This was also the preferred method by the WMC board. The information and data gathered is similar to a key informant interview, but rather than face-to face consultations with a semi-structured guide, Board members were provided with the opportunity to fill in their responses to the self-administered questionnaire. and return them directly to the evaluator by email within 2-3 weeks.

In mid-July 2023, the WMC Director forwarded an introductory email to board members along with the tailored questionnaire developed by GGI and a copy of the Logic Model. They were instructed to return the completed questionnaires to Goss Gilroy within three weeks (see Appendix B). Three reminders were sent. In total, 7 of 10 board members returned completed questionnaires.

Industry Partners, Online WMC Partner Survey (n=25)

The WMC Partner Survey consisted of an online survey starting with a series of questions as to the effectiveness of recruitment, increased awareness, and coordinated approach, followed by a series of profile questions (i.e., location, program, cohort, self-identity). The survey was written in plain language and consisted of yes/no answers and was estimated to take 5-10 minutes to complete. The survey was administered by GGI staff. The survey had a total of 25 responses from July 17th to

August 28th, 2023. They referred to in this report as survey respondents or industry partners. The results of the analysis are presented in the findings section of this report.

2.2 Data Coding and Analysis

GGI analyzed all data from the three different lines of evidence. The analysis consisted of a vertical and a horizontal analysis of the findings. In the first step (the vertical analysis), GGI focused on the three individual lines of evidence individually, that is, a) the document review; and b) the self-administered board questionnaire and c) the online WMC partner survey. For each of these lines of evidence, key findings were identified. In the second step (the horizontal analysis), GGI then compared the findings of the three lines of evidence and made linkages between them. This allowed GGI to identify essential insights for evaluating the project in its entirety.

Coding and Analysis for Key Informants

The qualitative data was analyzed using a structured qualitative analysis approach. Evaluators used thematic analysis to examine themes or patterns of meaning within the qualitative data.

Thematic analysis does not assign numeric or proportional values to the qualitative research findings, but rather, in summarizing the findings, qualifiers have been used to represent the strength or frequency of responses which have been defined, as follows:

None (0 or no)	A few (<20%)	Some (20-40%)	Half (40-60%)	Many (60-80%)	Most (80- 99%)	All (100%)
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2.3 Strengths and Limitations

Overall, this evaluation presents a strong methodology. The use of multiple lines of evidence enhances confidence in the findings. Consulting with several stakeholder groups involved in the program (i.e., board members and industry partners), the evaluation provides an opportunity to obtain objective information and perspectives on topics directly from them.

Considering that this was a medium-scale evaluation, only a relatively small number of project partners were surveyed and therefore the sample was small. This places certain limitations on representativeness of the evaluation findings. The majority of survey respondents (72%) indicated their organization serves the province of Ontario. While limited coverage is seen in other regions, 20% - 30% of respondents said their organization serves Alberta, Manitoba, British Columbia, New Brunswick or Saskatchewan. Further studies should expand reach to partners in other regions beyond Ontario, particularly the Maritime Region, Quebec and the North.

Despite these geographic limitations and the small sample size, GGI is confident that the evaluation findings adequately respond to immediate outcomes on each of the evaluation questions under consideration.

3.0 Findings

3.1 Relevance and Continued Need

Evaluation Question 1 – Is the Skills Matching and Opportunities in Wood Manufacturing Project Meeting a Continued Need?

KEY FINDINGS

This WMC project is seen as a way to provide much-needed support and effort that companies in Canada's wood manufacturing sector require. It aims to address the workforce needs and improve the industry's need for skilled workers and remain globally competitive. Since it no longer receives core federal fundings, projects like these fill a much-needed gap in skills matching to recruit job seekers in other sectors and remaining relevant to a changing demographic, particularly equity groups.

The **document review** shows the sector faces several barriers to recruitment including a lack of qualified workers and negative (and incorrect) perceptions about the sector in terms of the nature of the work, salary scales and job trajectories. Yet documents show opportunities are vast and abundant. Businesses in the sector face several HR challenges, including a lack of qualified workers, the need for new workforce skills, difficulty attracting new workers and difficulty replacing retiring workers.

All key informants agree that companies in the wood manufacturing sector have a need for workers, and in some cases, this need is limiting their ability to take on new work or expand their businesses. Additionally, some highlight that there is a lack of information communicated to students at the high school level about the diversity of roles and opportunities within the sector, which results in a gap in their knowledge and awareness of the range of potentially appealing opportunities in the wood manufacturing industry. This includes access to up-to-date LMI in the sector across different regions in the country.

The **survey** shows this project is aligned with industry needs. Nearly one-third (32%) of industry partners who responded to the WMC survey identified their firm is not adequately staffed at the lower-skilled worker level, the same is true for the supervisory level, and half (50%) of industry partners indicated their firm is not adequately staffed at the skilled worker level. Slightly less than half (45%) of survey respondents found that the employee turnover rate within their firm is not currently at an acceptable level.

Given these challenges and goals, all lines of evidence suggest that there is a continued need for this project to bridge gaps in knowledge and awareness of the sector and its needs.

Evidence of Continued Need

Document Review: Key Strengths and Challenges Facing the Sector

The Wood Manufacturing Council's LMI study with The Conference Board (2016) noted that Canada's advanced wood manufacturing sector is made up mostly of small operations across the country. While slightly dated, internal program documents (e.g., project proposal and quarterly reports) suggest this profile of the sector remains true today. There are few national companies, and most work locally or regionally. Nearly a decade on, businesses in the sector face continue to face HR challenges, including a lack of qualified workers, the need for new workforce skills, difficulty attracting new workers and difficulty replacing retiring workers. In particular, the sector faces several barriers to recruitment including a lack of qualified workers and negative (and incorrect) perceptions about the sector. Recommendations from the study included the establishment of clear occupational and essential skill standards, and language standards for the sector. Improving youth engagement strategies in primary and secondary schools was also noted.

As an industry leader, the WMC finds the need for labour is the number one issue identified by industry partners for the value added wood products industry. This is particularly true for skilled workers. It estimates there are approximately 90,000 workers in the sector nationally, and as an example, in Southern Ontario alone, there are 1,400 small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) in the wood sector, with 22,500 workers and revenues of \$5.2 billion, out of the province's total of \$6.6 billion for the wood sector. Exports from this sector for this region (Southern Ontario) touch \$3.5 billion.⁵

The wood manufacturing sector has emerged from the pandemic in very good shape, but labour shortages are limiting the sector's ability to take advantage of growth opportunities. The sector benefits from both new construction and from renovation/repair/remodelling. This sector also responds to increasing adaptive needs to support rebuilding from increasingly prevalent natural disasters.

Current Gaps in Knowledge

One key challenge is that labour market information has not been updated for the sector since 2016 and therefore up-to-date information on opportunities in wood manufacturing are lacking including current pay scales, regional opportunities and potential trajectories (LMI that could be potentially very attractive to job seekers).

The wood manufacturing sector is challenged by some perception issues. There is a general lack of awareness about the sector. Earlier research showed that people were not "de-selecting" careers in woodworking, they simply didn't know they existed. In addition, when Canadians think of the

⁵ Wood Manufacturing Cluster of ON.

wood manufacturing industry, they think of lumber and pulp and paper.⁶ This can often be associated with duty disputes with the United States that people see in the news and with mills (and as a result, perhaps towns) closing or going out of business or undergoing hardship. This may have people believe that wood manufacturing is a declining industry. This is a misperception; the industry is growing and there are no such trade disputes in the value added sector. Partner companies can be found in virtually every community in Canada, but notably are primarily an urban-based industry. This sector uses lumber and panel products as its basic raw material, and these are readily available in urban markets, close to the consumers.

Optics are key – for those who think they know the sector; it could be perceived as one dominated by menial labour, repetitive tasks and potentially dangerous working conditions. Again, this is not the case and the opportunity exists to make people aware of the many roles and opportunities in wood manufacturing operations and the range of careers available.

Recent studies have been undertaken that look at women in male-dominated apprenticeships to consider the kinds of marketing and communications strategies that can be used to appeal to this demographic.⁷ Less is known about the interests and potential career trajectories of diverse demographic groups in the sector, particularly immigrants and refugees. To market to different demographic groups, more research is needed to better understand their needs within the sector.

From an educational standpoint there are few barriers to entry into the sector. One can begin their career without credentials and the companies will train and cross train them to advance in their careers. Entry into the sector can be directly to work if someone is not in the education system, or it can be directly from high school to work. There are strong programs in woodworking, and cabinetmaking in several colleges across Canada (Nova Scotia Community College, Conestoga College, Red River College and NAIT to name a few), and one degree program in wood products processing in Canada (UBC Centre for Advanced Wood Processing), as well as one specific Red Seal occupation in the sector, Cabinetmaker (formerly known as Industrial Woodworker). For workers and their employers, WMC offers a high school woodworking curriculum, online management training, and pre-employment training for the sector. Mostly, partner companies are looking for people to hire.

Filling Current Knowledge Gaps

A key challenge facing the industry are labour shortages resulting in part from a lack of awareness of the wood manufacturing sector on the part of Canadians and particularly equity communities. WMC's proposed solution, through skills matching, consultation and outreach, is to build awareness of career opportunities available in the wood manufacturing sector. Its aim is to increase awareness

⁶ UBC Centre for Advanced Wood Processing. A survey of the Educational Needs of the Advanced Wood Products Processing Sector

⁷ Statistics Canada (2019). How Do Women in Male-dominated Apprenticeships Fare in the Labour Market? See also Construction Sector Council (2010). The State of Women in Construction in Canada.

in other sectors with transferable skills, as well as among Canadians from diverse backgrounds and communities in order to attract them to careers in wood manufacturing.

WMC has National Occupational Standards that identify skills and competencies for several key occupations in the woodworking sector, but it has been difficult for WMC to access to skills information for occupations in other sectors that might provide good matches for sector specific labour shortages. The NOS is intended to provide new entrants with an understanding of skills requirements and their path to higher positions in the sector. The process of consultation with target groups in the development of outreach materials is designed to ensure WMC is addressing their concerns and are producing appropriate, sensitive materials that will effectively convey the opportunities available.

Skills Matching and the OpportuNext Platform

A key feature of this project is the application of the OpportuNext tool to take a skills matching approach. The ability to identify occupations in other sectors that have similar skills to key occupations in the sector is seen to be very helpful and potentially allow for the chance to highlight the sector to a new group of prospective Canadian workers.

The FSC has partnered with the Conference Board of Canada to develop the OpportuNext platform in order to identify potential job transitions for Canadian workers seeking new career opportunities that are both viable and desirable.⁸ The Conference Board defines viability and desirability in the following way:

- 1) **A viable job** is one that has similar skills, abilities, knowledge, experiences, and educational credentials. Viable transitions are identified where similarity scores between occupations are high, and the transition does not require large leaps in job groups.
- 2) **A desirable job** is one that pays similar or higher wages, and has growing employment prospects. A desirable job is defined as a move to jobs with growth prospects and where wages are similar or better than the current position.⁹

According to the Conference Board, the four criteria needed in order for an occupation to be a potential transition are as follows:

- 1) Job similarity scores of 0.85 or higher;
- 2) Are in a similar job group;
- 3) Expected to have rising employment over the next 10 years; and,
- 4) Pay at least 90 per cent of the earnings in the initial occupation.¹⁰

⁸ Conference Board of Canada (2021). Modelling Job Transitions in Canada: A primer.

⁹ Ibid, p. 10.

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 14.

Employers facing shortages in one occupation can use the database to identify potential workers in other similar occupations.¹¹

The Conference Board consulted with the WMC for skills matching and to assess the transition potential for entry into wood manufacturing occupations. These were considered for recruitment and marketing and communications for attracting workers from outside the sector. For details see Evaluation Question 3 under skills matching.

Industry Needs as Identified within Partner Survey

This Skills Matching project is aligned with industry needs. Nearly one-third (32%) of industry partners who responded to the WMC survey identified their firm is not adequately staffed at the supervisor level and lower-skilled worker level, and half (50%) of industry partners indicated their firm is not adequately staffed at the skilled worker level. Slightly less than half (45%) of survey respondents found that the employee turnover rate within their firm is not at an acceptable level.

Key Informants: Gaps and Recruitment Needs

The WMC Board has identified recruitment as its top priority. The Board also recognizes the need to strengthen the profile of the advanced wood products industry.

The wood products industry is struggling with attracting new employees into the industry. A big part of this is the lack information that is communicated starting at the high school level.

All key informants agree that companies in the wood manufacturing sector have a need for workers, and in some cases, this need is limiting their ability to take on new work or expand their businesses. Additionally, some highlight that there is a lack of information communicated to students at the high school level about the diversity of roles and opportunities within the sector, which results in a gap in their knowledge

and awareness of the range of potentially appealing opportunities in the wood manufacturing industry. This includes access to up-to-date LMI in the sector across different regions in the country.

In particular, key informants were interested in developing a more targeted approach to recruitment from industries with transferable skills and saw this project as a way to increase awareness of wood manufacturing jobs and industry among potential job seekers. Another area of interest is how to raise awareness among key target groups such as women, newcomers and immigrants and Indigenous groups. This project was seen as a way to expand partnerships and reach to target groups in career centres and post-secondary institutions.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 15.

Some of us have been working on attracting a future skilled workforce since the early 90s...This project is an important continuation of all that effort because we have the expertise and desire of our companies, and these increased resources the project has provided us with allows us to market our opportunities to Canadians to a greater extent that it normally can. Good careers are available, we just need to tell our story.

This project builds on existing knowledge gaps within the sector. WMC produced career information many years ago (15), but it was general, generic information that did not take into consideration any specific messaging targeted to equity groups. WMC has done some very limited recruiting as well, but only in regard to securing participation in pre-employment training programs. These programs take place in a small number of communities each year and contain only a limited number of seats per program. This project fills this gap by providing resources for targeted outreach to career fairs and post-secondary recruitment at industry events.

The document review shows WMC has not had a specific “recruiting/career awareness” project of this magnitude in many years. WMC reports a positive reaction and eager participation from stakeholders, who have engaged in and contributed to activities as part of this project.¹²

As highlighted and detailed in the recommendations section, gaps remain. Labour market information has not been updated for the sector since 2016 and therefore recruitment efforts may be dampened by outdated data on pay scales, regional opportunities and potential trajectories. Key Informants familiar with industry standards suggest current opportunities, salaries/pay grades and regional opportunities are far greater than currently reflected on the OpportuNext platform.

¹² WMC (2023). Woodworking – Skills Matching. Developed for national trade magazines, August.

3.2 Effectiveness & Impact

Evaluation Question 2 – To What Extent has WMC Been Effective in Developing a Coordinated Approach to HR Promotion Within and Outside the Sector?

KEY FINDINGS

Evidence of Effective Approach to Coordination on HR Issues

Stakeholders agree (key informants and industry partners) on the need for a coordinated approach to HR & promotion within and outside the sector.

The **document review** shows the WMC is an established leader in the sector and its mandate is to bring together key stakeholders to address HR issues. The WMC brings together employers, employees, education, governments and other interested parties to develop the workforce for Canada's wood manufacturing industry, helping make it more competitive and ensuring long-term growth.¹ This project builds on existing collaborations to fill gaps in knowledge.

All key informants found the project has demonstrated a high degree of effectiveness in establishing a coordinated approach to HR and promotion within the woodworking sector. All were also in agreement that the program successfully facilitated collaboration between the Wood Manufacturing Council (WMC) and woodworking companies, as well as their trade associations. Additionally, most indicated the project extended its reach beyond the woodworking sector by involving Boards of Education and post-secondary institutions.

The large majority of survey respondents (85%) 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the WMC is effective in helping to develop strategies in recruitment. Almost all survey respondents (91%) 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the WMC is effective in helping industry and their partners share information.

Evidence of the Impact of a National Recruiter on the Awareness of Careers in the Sector

All key informants suggest that the availability of a national recruiter can have a significant impact on raising awareness of careers in the wood sector. All indicated that WMC is playing a key role in advancing this work. WMC is described as the organization taking the lead in recruitment efforts within the sector, and no other organizations fill this role.

Evidence of Effectiveness of a Coordinated Approach to HR & Promotion Within and Outside the Sector

All stakeholder groups agree (key informants and industry partners) on the need for a coordinated approach to HR & promotion within/outside the sector and findings show WMC's effectiveness in creating a coordinated approach to HR and promotion.

Key Informants on Effective Coordination on HR Issues by the WMC

We [WMC] are committed to providing much-needed service to the entire wood sector, based on very specific needs for each manufacturing segment.

All key informants found the project has demonstrated a significant level of effectiveness in establishing a coordinated approach to HR and promotion within the woodworking sector. All were also in agreement that the program successfully facilitated collaboration between the Wood Manufacturing Council (WMC) and woodworking companies, as well as their trade associations.

Additionally, most indicated the project extended its reach beyond the woodworking sector by involving Boards of Education and post-secondary institutions.

Many key informants reported extensive industry partnerships, government support from entities like the Ontario Government and the New Brunswick government, and the involvement of associations and companies in creating career profiles and promotional materials contribute to the project's success. To some key informants, this collaborative and sustained effort signifies that the project is actively working towards its goal of coordinating HR and promotion efforts both within and outside the woodworking sector, with positive outcomes.

Document Review on the WMC's Coordinated Approach to Recruitment

The document review shows the WMC's mandate is to bring together key stakeholders to address HR issues in the sector. The WMC is notably an established leader in the sector and this project builds on existing collaborations to fill gaps in knowledge.

The Wood Manufacturing Council (WMC) promotes itself as Canada's human resources sector council for the advanced wood manufacturing industry. The WMC brings together employers, employees, education, governments and other interested parties to develop the workforce for Canada's wood manufacturing industry, helping make it more competitive and ensuring long-term growth.¹³

The sector represented by the WMC generally comprises the Canadian companies involved in the manufacturing of value-added wood products and does not include those companies involved in the

¹³ WMC Brochure, 2023.

production of lumber and paper products. Examples of this sector's products include wooden and upholstered furniture, wooden kitchen cabinets, bathroom vanities, wooden windows and doors and other millwork such as flooring, trusses and fencing.

WMC has been a national sector leader for over 20 years and builds on alliances formed over 30 years in Canada. As a result of a partnership between HRDC, Industry Canada, the National Educational Initiative for Furniture and Wood Products Industries (NEI) and other leaders, the WMC was established in February 2002. The NEI was formed in 1994 to address human resource needs in the furniture and wood product industries, specifically the lack of Canadian-trained wood product engineers available to the industry. NEI's vision led to the establishment of the Centre for Advanced Wood Processing at the University of British Columbia.

Mandate and Objectives of the WMC

The WMC is an independent, non-profit corporation with a private sector Board of Directors. A permanent Board of Directors was elected at the first annual meeting in the fall of 2002. WMC has striven to ensure that its board is representative of diverse industries and opportunities within the wood manufacturing sector. The WMC Board is comprised of representatives from various wood manufacturing industry sectors and academia.

The WMC provides a national forum for employers, workers, educators, governments and other interested parties to address the sector's human resources (HR) challenges. One of the primary reasons WMC was established was to strengthen the image of the Sector to attract and retain qualified staff and managers. Some of the same industry champions who established the NEI (and UBC program/centre) then the WMC, went on to create Canada's only wood cluster organization, the Wood Manufacturing Cluster of Ontario (formerly the Bluewater Wood Alliance). The WMC works in partnership with sectoral trade associations such as the Canadian Kitchen Cabinet Association, Canadian Hardwood Bureau, and many others.

Since 2014, the WMC has been funded through funds generated from Calls for Proposal from both Federal and Provincial governments, transfer payment agreements with various organizations and some contracts with private companies and non-governmental organizations. WMC funding, therefore, is currently project specific, and consistent with its the mandate. There has been a focus on pre-employment training, with a good roster of sector firms who have offered work placements and have hired WMC trainees.

For this reason, projects like the Skills Matching Project, provide much needed support to allow the WMC to expand their recruitment activities by providing up-to date resources and support ongoing collaborations with industry partners. While the WMC no longer receives core funding from SPI, the WMC's mandate has remained unchanged:

To plan, develop and implement human resources strategies that support the long-term growth and competitiveness of Canada's advanced wood products manufacturing industry and meet the developmental needs of its workforce.

A review of documents demonstrate the WMC's continued relevance in the sector. The current objectives of the WMC are to:

- Build long-term HR capacity in the wood manufacturing sector;
- Enhance global capacity and productivity of sector through proactive HR practices; and,
- WMC recognized as a credible, knowledge-based leader in HR issues related to wood manufacturing.

Key Stakeholders

WMC stakeholders include Board members, and a range of constituent members as follows:

- Board members
- WMC Constituent Members including:
 - Any company or organization involved in the advanced wood products manufacturing industry (both manufacturers and those involved in supply and/or service to the industry);
 - Any union or union local whose members are employed by firms in this industry; or
 - Any Canadian College or university offering a program(s) in advanced wood products processing.

In addition, WMC partners/potential partners include:

- Research institutions;
- Industry;
- Education and training institutions;
- Private and public sector entities with expertise in global competitiveness in advanced wood manufacturing and processing sector;
- Equity groups;
- Primary resource sector; and
- Cross-sectoral organizations (i.e., Alliance Sector WMC, Canada Career Consortium).

WMC clients/potential clients include:

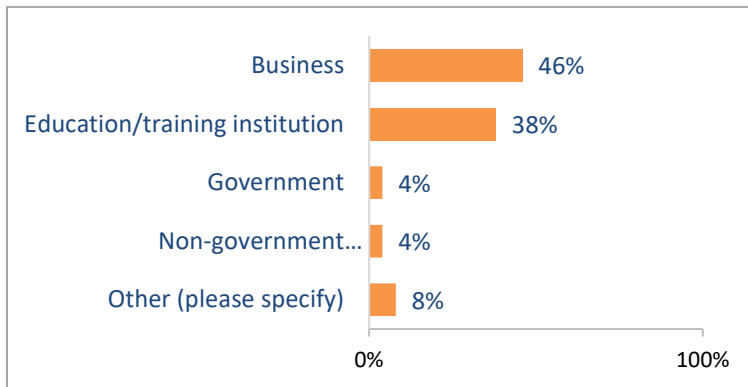
- Companies and organizations involved in the advanced wood products manufacturing industry; and;
- Potential employees in the advanced wood products industry (targeting youths, women, Indigenous people, newcomers, immigrants and other under-represented groups).

This project builds on WMC's collaborations within the sector to provide feedback on industry needs.

Survey of Wood Manufacturing Partner Organizations

While the sample is small (n=25), the survey is fairly representative of the kinds of organizations that WMC serves. The largest proportion of survey respondents represented businesses (46%), while 38% represented education/training institutions. Fewer respondents identified working for government (4%) or non-government organizations (4%). Of note, 8% of respondents cited 'Other'. These included consultants and trainers.

Figure 2: Type of Organization Represented (n=25)



Size of Workforce

Organizations responding to the survey were fairly diverse in size from small to medium enterprises (SMEs) to large scale organizations and institutions. Eighteen of twenty-four organizations identified how many employees worked at their business. At the time of the survey, 12 organizations reported having 1-25 employees with the majority having under 10 people. Another 3 organizations cited 26-40 employees at their business with the remaining 3 being from large organizations with over 100 employees. Taken together, participating organizations represent well over 500 employees within the sector.

Sector Areas

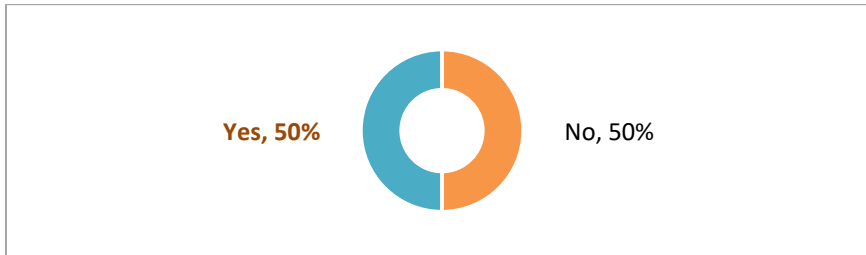
A diversity of sector areas are represented in this sample. Most survey respondents identified working in the product lines of wood processing (e.g., producing lumber) and/or in woodworking (e.g., making cabinets), including custom made products for residential and contractual use. As well, some respondents made general carpentry products, completed renovations, were employed as mill workers, and/or worked in non-wood-related product lines (e.g., mattresses, appliances).

A few respondents explained that their business was not product based but rather they were an association for the sector or they provided services related to wood manufacturing, such as education/workshops, consulting, product development services, and/or the use of equipment and tools.

Indication of a HR Plan

Half the survey respondents identified having an HR plan at their firm. The remaining respondents indicated they did not have such a plan.

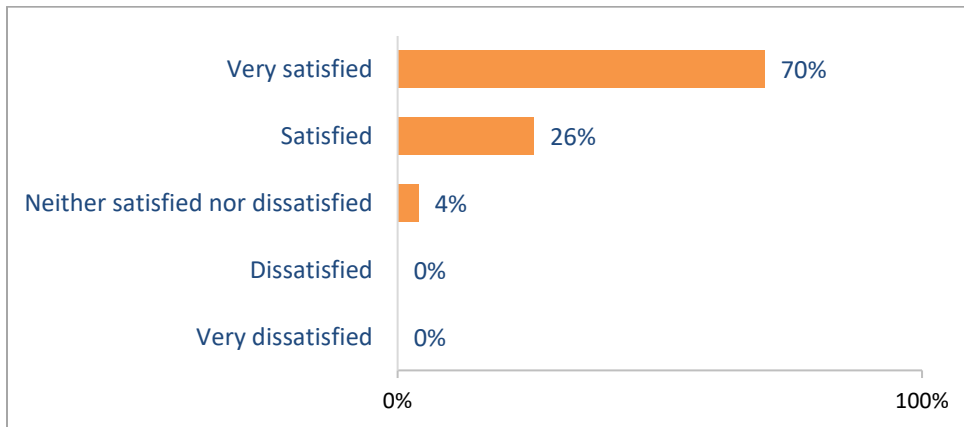
Figure 3: Indication of a HR Plan at their Firm (i.e., Projected HR Needs, Training Plans, Recruitment Plans, etc.) (n=18)



Satisfaction with WMC's Project Overall in Meeting their HR Needs

The large majority of survey respondents (96%) were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the overall WMC skills matching project in meeting their HR needs. The remaining respondents were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied'.

Figure 4: Satisfaction with WMC's Project Overall (n=23)



Recruitment Strategies

The large majority of survey respondents (85%) 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the WMC is effective in helping to develop strategies in recruitment. Ten percent of respondents provided a neutral rating and 5% 'strongly disagreed'.

Table 1: The WMC is effective in helping developing strategies in recruitment (n=21)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
%	52%	33%	10%	0%	5%

Effectiveness of WMC’s Support to Industry

The WMC provides career information (particularly helpful to small firms that do not have the resources to create their own materials), which allow them to recruit and spread career information and awareness of the employment opportunities that individuals from other sectors and equity communities can take advantage of. Almost all survey respondents (91%) ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that the WMC is effective in helping industry and their partners share information. Nine percent of respondents ‘strongly disagreed’ with this statement.

Table 2: The WMC is Effective in Helping Industry and their Partners Share Information (n=22)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
%	41%	50%	0%	0%	9%

When asked if they had any additional comments to provide, the majority of survey respondents who did so praised the WMC for the positive experience they have had in working with the organization. Survey respondents said, for example, the WMC brings attention to a valuable industry and helps individuals navigate and locate entry points into the woodworking sector.

As well, one respondent explained that the WMC inspired the expansion of their education program, from which they have experienced great success to date.

Evidence of the Impact of the Availability of a National Recruiter on the Awareness of Careers in the Sector

A national recruiter brings a big impact. They could do the work that everyone wants to do but don’t have the time to do because they are running their businesses. It could help all the wood associations across the country.

All key informants suggest that the availability of a national recruiter can have a significant impact on raising awareness of careers in the wood sector. **The WMC fills a gap:** none of the associations had a dedicated recruiter and only one post-secondary school had a full-time recruiter, and other institutions primarily focused on college-wide recruitment rather than prioritizing wood programs.

All indicated that WMC is playing a key role in advancing this work. WMC is described as the organization taking the lead in recruitment efforts within the sector. While some other associations touch on recruitment, **all** key informants see WMC as the primary organization dedicated to HR activities in the sector, meaning there is no duplication in the sector. Therefore, it appears that WMC is playing a significant role in advancing this work, with other organizations playing a more limited, complementary role or none at all.

[WMC works with] small and medium sized businesses that have limited time and resources to promote careers. In the absence of a national trade association, WMC is the one organization in the sector that is dedicated to promoting careers and training in the sector and can contribute significantly to the awareness and education about are industry and its great careers to Canadians.

Evaluation Question 3 – To what Extent has the Skills Matching Project Been Effective in Targeted Recruitment from Industries with Transferable Skills?

KEY FINDINGS

Recruiting from Industries with Transferable Skills

Many key informants believe the Skills Matching project has been effective in identifying individuals from industries with transferable skills. Key activities cited include skills matching research undertaken in collaboration with the Conference Board, analysis of relevant skills and roles and the development of relevant tools for recruitment.

Key informants with the WMC are very satisfied with the OpportuNext platform and its usefulness in identifying potential matches for careers namely, with similar skill sets requirements, skills etc. that exceed the similarity score of .85. They would like to work more closely with the Conference Board to further refine their matches by narrowing scope and considering desirability. These results feed directly into their targeted marketing and recruitment strategies.

Most key informants suggest the project has been successful in increasing awareness of wood manufacturing jobs and the industry among potential job seekers. The skills matching process has succeeded in broadening the perception of the wood industry, highlighting its sustainability and diverse career opportunities beyond lumber and paper.

Evidence of Effective Targeted Recruitment From Industries with Transferable Skills and Immediate Impacts in Terms of Skills Matching and Career Awareness Efforts

Key impacts are greater awareness first and foremost, just people knowing about value added wood, but beyond that by seeing the vast skills that our companies use (sales, manufacturing, computers, design, logistics) and by learning that we have jobs and learning the exciting products we make.

Highly Effective Matching on Similarity

Many key informants believe the Skills Matching project has been effective in identifying individuals from industries with transferable skills. Key activities cited include skills matching research undertaken in collaboration with the Conference Board, analysis of relevant skills and roles and the development of relevant tools for recruitment.

Key informants with the WMC are very satisfied with the OpportuNext platform and its usefulness

in identifying potential matches for careers namely, with similar skill sets requirements, skills etc. that exceed the similarity score of 0.85. They would like to work more closely with the Conference Board to further refine their matches by narrowing scope and considering desirability. These results feed directly into their targeted marketing and recruitment strategies.

HR Research to Find Industries with Transferable Skills

Skills matching (and education matching) provides a comparison of the listed skills and competencies (and educational requirements) for the occupations that are part of the National Occupational Classification (NOC) database. It allows one to see what occupations are comparable to those in the woodworking sector and suggests where the wood industry might look (in other sectors) for potential employees.¹⁴

As part of this project, the Conference Board provided the WMC with 135 matches with similarity scores over 0.85 under the following 7 job categories:

- 1) Lumber graders and other wood processing inspectors and graders (19)
- 2) Machining tool operators (12)
- 3) Supervisors, furniture and fixtures manufacturing (21)
- 4) Residential and commercial installers and servicers (26)
- 5) Machinists and machining and tooling inspectors (8)
- 6) Cabinetmakers (5)
- 7) Interior designers and interior decorators (44)

¹⁴ WMC (2023). Woodworking – Skills Matching. Developed for national trade magazines, August.

Skills Matching in the Wood Manufacturing Sector

From this list of matches, the WMC selected three job categories to pursue more actively for recruitment purposes. These included: 1) Cabinetmakers, 2) Interior designers and decorators, and 3) Lumber graders and other wood processing inspectors and graders.

Focusing on these three job areas, WMC then selected four to six of the “matching” occupations from the “matching” spreadsheet to use in informing people of the opportunities. To give an example of the data the WMC received from the skills/education matching research (from the Conference Board of Canada): the closest skills matching for the Cabinetmaker occupation included:

- 1) Aircraft assemblers and aircraft assembly inspectors;
- 2) Metalworking and forging machine operators;
- 3) Residential and commercial installers and servicers;
- 4) Other products assemblers, finishers and inspectors;
- 5) Mechanical assemblers and inspectors.

Matches based on Education Level Alone

The closest matching from strictly an education perspective, again for the Cabinetmaker occupation, included:

- 1) Underground mine service and support workers;
- 2) Mining and quarry supervisors;
- 3) Other small engine and small equipment repairers;
- 4) Contractors and supervisors, heavy equipment;
- 5) Coat assemblers and inspectors etc.

Identified Sector Skills: Interior Designers

The closest skills matching for Interior designers and decorators occupation included:

- 1) Administrative officers;
- 2) Other technical and co-ordinating occupations in motion pictures, broadcasting and the performing arts;
- 3) Assessors, valuers and appraisers;
- 4) Utilities managers/construction estimators.

The WMC just recently received detailed descriptions for lumber graders and other wood processing inspectors and graders and has not yet analyzed the data and more work needs to be done. Refer to the recommendations section for more details. The WMC plans to use this information in its on-going recruiting efforts.

While still underway, **most** key informants suggest the project has been successful in increasing awareness of wood manufacturing jobs and the industry among potential job seekers. The skills

matching process has succeeded in broadening the perception of the wood industry, highlighting its sustainability and diverse career opportunities beyond lumber and paper.

Evaluation Question 4 – How Effective has WMC Been in Making Diverse Target Groups Aware of Opportunities in the Wood Manufacturing Sector?

KEY FINDINGS

Findings show project success in raising awareness of opportunities in the sector to diverse target groups.

The document review shows WMC has successfully engaged employment agencies, career centres and community groups, who are eager to find opportunities for their constituents and clients. They have helped in the distribution of career awareness materials, welcomed in-person visits to outline wood careers and to recruit their clients into our training programs.

The survey shows a high degree of satisfaction with the brochures and promotional materials (95%). Almost all survey respondents (90%) ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that the WMC is effective in helping developing strategies in career development. Seventy percent of survey respondents ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that the WMC is effective in helping to develop curriculum for training institutions and industry.

Forty-eight percent of survey respondents identified their target for recruitment as each of second career job seekers transitioning into the sector and/or post-secondary students. Fifty-six percent of survey respondents identified their target group(s) as each of an immigrant, refugee, and/or newcomer to Canada, and/or a racialized person/person of color. Slightly fewer respondents (52%) indicated their target group was an Indigenous person. The remaining respondents identified their target group as a member of the LGBTQ2S+ community (40%), a person with a disability (32%), and/or Other (12%).

Most key informants believe WMC has been highly effective in its efforts to make diverse target groups aware of and attract them to opportunities in the wood manufacturing sector.

Most key informants indicated that the WMC has actively engaged with a variety of communities, utilized employment centers, and collaborated with cultural organizations, resulting in wood shops and schools becoming more diverse places. Some key informants note this is particularly notable among newcomers to Canada, who have been reached through employment centers and schools.

However, **some** have said that **the project's impact has been somewhat limited due to its small geographical reach**, with outreach centred primarily in Ontario. Given this project's short duration, it is too early to assess the programs reach in attracting job seekers over time (intermediate outcome, 2-3 years).

Evidence of Increased Awareness of Wood Manufacturing Jobs among Diverse Target Groups

By visiting or communicating with the employment centers and cultural organizations we are successfully attracting people and making them aware of our opportunities...Schools are very diverse as well, so we see a wide variety of potential employees with our work there too.

Attracting Diverse Target Groups to the Sector

Most key informants believe WMC has been highly effective in its efforts to make diverse target groups aware of and attract them to opportunities in the wood manufacturing sector.

Most key informants indicated that the WMC has actively engaged with a variety of communities, utilized employment centers, and collaborated with cultural organizations, resulting in wood shops and schools becoming more diverse places.

Industry members and associations have partnered with WMC to update and create career awareness materials, including brochures, web materials, career profiles, videos, testimonials etc. Industry partners provided feedback to customize materials and refine messaging in order to appeal to diverse groups (e.g. women, Immigrants, and Indigenous communities).¹⁵ They have provided expertise, photography/video, support, organization, time, access to their networks etc.

The associations and companies are working with WMC on career awareness information, like career profiles, where film and video is being captures so job seekers can see the work environment, the skills needs and the important and attractive products we make.

The brochures and pamphlets have been modernized to reflect current industry needs and reflect the diversity of roles and target groups within the imaging and communications. The messaging is: “there are well paid, technically advanced career opportunities in wood manufacturing at every level”.¹⁶ Marketing materials indicate there are over ten thousand companies across Canada today that transform lumber, wood chips and panel products into a wide range of manufactured products. Brochures highlight the many opportunities in the advanced wood manufacturing sector, such as:

- Kitchen cabinets
- Architectural millwork
- Furniture
- Windows and doors

¹⁵ WMC Quarterly report for FSC, May 2023.

¹⁶ WMC brochure, 2023.

- Solid and laminated flooring and moulding
- Pre-fabricated buildings
- Structural components (pre-fabricated walls, trusses)
- Engineered wood products
- Mass timber
- Industrial products (re-manufactured wood, formwork)¹⁷

These materials are used by recruiters at post-secondary institutions with woodworking/cabinet-making programs and by guidance counsellors and trades and technology teachers at high school level to support their students to consider careers in woodworking. This has also been used by employment counsellors and job developers in employment centres and community organizations to support and inform their clients about opportunities in the sector.

Presentations to High Schools

School officials are using WMC materials (career information, essential skills, high school curriculum) in their schools. Teachers and guidance people have come to events and/or brought students to events that include and/or focus on woodworking careers and skill requirements. Career centers and employment agencies are displaying and distributing our information, informing their clients about the wood sector, helping us to recruit for our training programs – including holding information sessions.

Materials developed through this project supported the ability to make face-to-face presentations to schools and community organizations.

The post-secondary educators in woodworking have presented on their programs and their industry to such audiences as school boards, teachers, students, career seekers etc. They too have assisted in updating and creating career awareness materials, providing amongst other things their expertise, images, support, organization, time, networks etc. They have offered tours of their facilities, invited people to meetings to gather input from Industry (Program Advisory Committees and other group meetings). They have also hosted and participated at meetings/discussions between Post-Secondary educators on programs, issues, challenges.

The document review also shows WMC has successfully engaged employment agencies, career centres and community groups, who are eager to find opportunities for their constituents and clients. They have helped in the distribution of career awareness materials, welcomed in-person visits to outline wood careers and to recruit their clients into our training programs. They have organized and hosted on-line sessions with Employment Counsellors, on-line recruiting sessions with clients (job seekers) to introduce them to woodworking careers and to inform them of our

¹⁷ Ibid.

training programs, and they have had their Career Counsellors participate in our information sessions and local PD Day Events. High school-Board reps, tech teachers, guidance counsellors etc. have also reportedly been good partners in this effort.¹⁸

Most key informants suggest the project has been successful in increasing awareness and the attractiveness of wood manufacturing jobs and the industry among potential job seekers. It has succeeded in broadening the perception of the wood industry, highlighting its sustainability and diverse career opportunities beyond lumber and paper.

We [WMC] are inviting employment agencies to learn about our industry and they are pleased to do so. They help us promote our careers and we have been invited to their information sessions, both live and virtual.

Additionally, **some** noted that job seekers have been exposed to various skill sets within the sector, such as computer and tech skills, craftsmanship, and design skills.

Overall findings: The project's engagement efforts through career fairs, skills competitions, and school events have raised awareness among the target audience. However, **some** have said that **the project's impact has been somewhat limited due to its small**

geographical reach, with outreach centred primarily in Ontario. Given this project's short duration, it is too early to assess the program's reach in attracting job seekers over time (intermediate outcome, 2-3 years).

Evidence of WMC HR Products and Services Meeting Industry Needs to Reach Job Seekers Outside the Sector

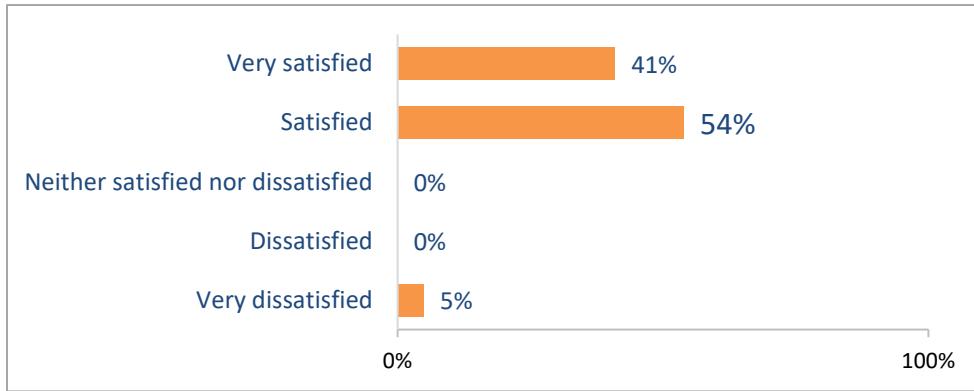
The survey shows a high degree of satisfaction with the brochures and promotional materials (95%). Almost all survey respondents (90%) 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the WMC is effective in helping develop strategies in career development. Seventy percent of survey respondents 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the WMC is effective in helping to develop curriculum for training institutions and industry.

Satisfaction with Promotional Materials

Ninety-five percent of survey respondents were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with regard to WMC's brochures and promotional materials. The remaining respondents felt 'very dissatisfied'.

¹⁸ WMC (2023). Woodworking – Skills Matching. Developed for national trade magazines, August.

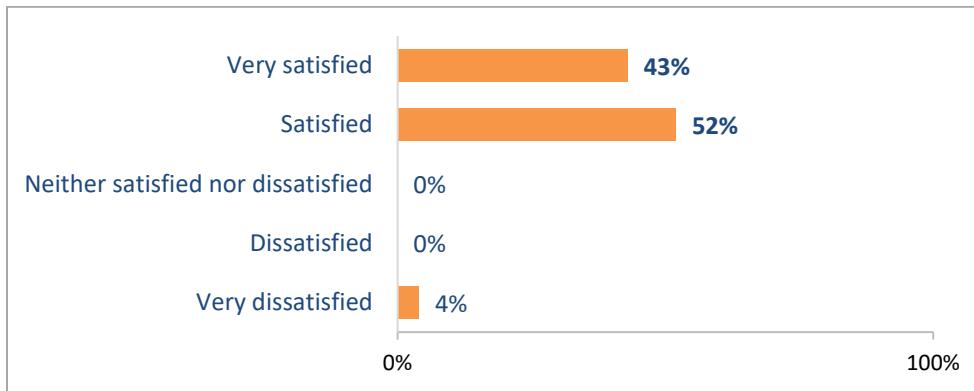
Figure 5: Satisfaction with WMC’s Brochures and Promotional Materials (n=22)



Satisfaction with Website

Just over half of survey respondents identified as ‘satisfied’ in consideration of the Wood Manufacturing Council Website, while 43% were ‘very satisfied’. Of note, a rating of ‘very dissatisfied’ was provided by 4% of respondents.

Figure 6: Satisfaction with Wood Manufacturing Council Website (n=23)



WMC Strategies in Career Development

Almost all survey respondents (90%) ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that the WMC is effective in helping developing strategies in career development. The remaining 10% of respondents ‘disagreed’ or ‘strongly disagreed’.

Table 3: The WMC is effective in helping developing strategies in career development (n=21)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
%	52%	38%	0%	5%	5%

WMC Curriculum for Training Institutions

Seventy percent of survey respondents ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that the WMC is effective in helping to develop curriculum for training institutions and industry. Fifteen percent felt neutral towards this statement and 5% ‘strongly disagreed’.

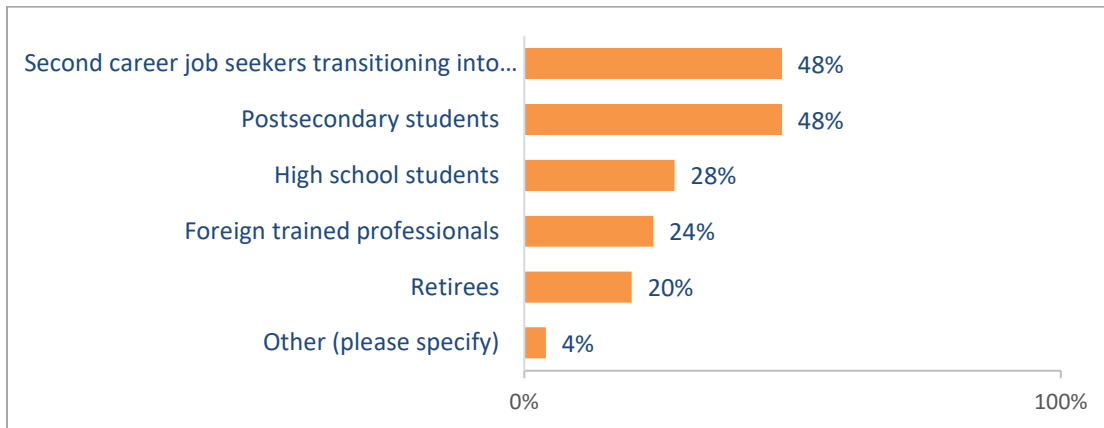
Table 4: The WMC is Effective in Helping Developing Curriculum for Training Institutions and Industry (n=20)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
%	60%	20%	15%	0%	5%

Type of Individual Targeted for Recruitment

Forty-eight percent of survey respondents identified their target for recruitment as each of second career job seekers transitioning into the sector and/or post-secondary students. Twenty percent to 30% of respondents indicated high school students, foreign trained professionals, and/or retirees, and 4% said ‘other’.

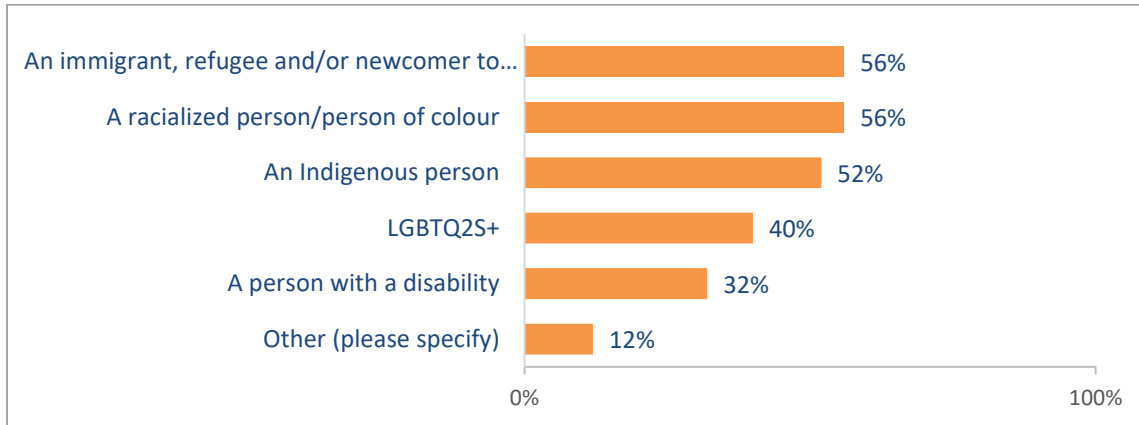
Figure 7: Targets for recruitment (n=25)



Diverse Target Groups for Recruitment

Fifty-six percent of survey respondents identified their target group(s) as being immigrant, refugee, and/or newcomer to Canada, and/or a racialized person/person of color. Slightly fewer respondents (52%) indicated their target group was associated with an Indigenous person. The remaining respondents identified their target group in relation to the LGBTQ2S+ community (40%), a person with a disability (32%), and/or Other (12%).

Figure 8: Target groups (n=25)



In terms of recommendations and advice from industry partners and stakeholders regarding promoting careers in a sector with limited barriers to entry and no formal credential requirements, the stakeholder feedback suggests several key strategies. These include highlighting success stories of individuals who have thrived without formal education, gathering testimonials to showcase their achievements, and emphasizing the importance of work ethic and attitude over formal credentials.

Additionally, continuing to target newcomers and similar groups and addressing any misconceptions about the necessity of credentials can further enhance efforts to promote careers in the wood manufacturing sector.

These recommendations collectively contribute to a more inclusive and accessible approach to career promotion within the sector.

3.3 Partnerships

Evaluation Question 5 – To What Extent has WMC been Effective in Developing New Partnerships with Industry; Educators (HS and post-secondary) and Employment Agencies, Career Centres?

KEY FINDINGS

All relevant lines of evidence show the WMC has been successful in developing new partnerships.

All key informants found the WMC has successfully forged partnerships with industry, educators (including high schools and post-secondary institutions), and employment agencies/career centers.

These findings are consistent with the **document review** of quarterly reports which shows the development of new and expanded partnerships with:

- 1) industry partners;
- 2) educators (high school and post-secondary reps); and,
- 3) employment agencies/career centres

The partnerships' effectiveness can be seen in the range of support and collaborations identified. These include feedback, facility access, career information dissemination, and recruitment assistance, all of which indicate that the partnerships are achieving their intended goals.

The Wood Manufacturing Council's long-standing partnerships and their involvement with key institutions like colleges and universities underscore the effectiveness of their collaboration efforts in the woodworking industry.

Evidence of Effective New Partnerships

The WMC has extensive partnerships with industry groups, individual firms and schools across the country. We are meeting and working with more groups through this project. HR has everyone's attention and both industry and education are working together to attract and train for wood manufacturing jobs.

All key informants found the WMC has successfully forged partnerships with industry, educators (including high schools and post-secondary institutions), and employment agencies/career centers.

All point out that these partnerships are characterized by industry partners providing valuable feedback and support, educators actively using WMC materials, and employment agencies assisting with recruiting and information dissemination. The willingness of industry partners to recruit with the WMC suggests a strong and effective partnership with the woodworking sector.

These findings are consistent with the review of quarterly reports which shows the development of new and expanded partnerships with:

- 1) industry partners;
- 2) educators (high school and post-secondary reps); and,
- 3) employment agencies/career centres

These partnerships have been very beneficial and lots of good work is being done collectively and will continue to be done through this project. We are reaching current students and those looking for jobs. This project allows us to do more of this – the support for marketing our jobs is key

Partnerships: The partnerships' effectiveness can be seen in the range of support and collaborations identified. These include feedback, facility access, career information dissemination, and recruitment assistance, all of which indicate that the partnerships are achieving their intended goals.

The Wood Manufacturing Council's long-standing partnerships and their involvement with key institutions like colleges and universities underscore the effectiveness of their collaboration efforts in the woodworking industry.

Evaluation Question 6 – To What Extent has this Project Improved Sharing of WMC Information and Best Practices (Sector Partners)?

KEY FINDINGS

National occupational standards for key occupations.

The WMC has been working to develop national occupational profiles for the following occupations: Admin., Design, Management, Procurement, Production and Assembly; Completion, Finishing, Installers, Sales and Marketing, Shipping, Technology & Information Technology¹

Survey Results

All survey respondents were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with WMC's leadership role in the support and development of national standards and HR strategies. The large majority (83%) 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the WMC is effective in helping developing competency standards and profiles.

Key Informants on Responding to Industry Needs

Most key informants found that WMC is meeting industry needs.

Many key informants suggest that WMC has undertaken a comprehensive approach to identify industry needs and best practices. Results show the WMC has engaged in collaboration with a diverse set of stakeholders, including companies, sector trade associations, educators, and industry representatives. The project itself includes partners from the sector including the Canadian Kitchen Cabinet association; Canadian Hardwood Bureau and other sector trade associations and post-secondary institutes with wood processing programs. WMC also consulted with Le Comité Sectoriel de main d'oeuvre (Quebec) for the sector.

Data Limitations

While WMC is very pleased with skills matching on **similarity scores**, they have some concerns around the **desirability scores** as they find OpportuNext does not include the latest labour market information (LMI) for their sector.¹

For example, Key Informants find their industry is much more attractive in terms of opportunities overall, and opportunities for diverse target groups, and salary ranges are much higher than is currently reflected on the OpportuNext platform. According to the Conference Board of Canada (2021) data reflect averages across occupations, regardless of geographic location, employing industry, or other unique features of a specific job. ¹

Evidence of Developing Skills Profile for Key Roles in the Sector

We are working with individual companies to help create occupational profile videos. Industry is very supportive of this work as they all see the need and benefit of attracting new workers to our industry. We reached out to two companies to create occupational video profiles and both companies have agreed to supporting this initiative.

Work on occupational profiles and skills profiles continued throughout the WMC project. Companies and sector trade associations have helped to identify key occupations and we have worked with and consulted on our most recent LMI data to confirm key occupations for the sector. The WMC has spoken extensively to educators and industry reps regarding their needs. The WMC has used a variety of sources including its own existing National Occupational Standards, information from

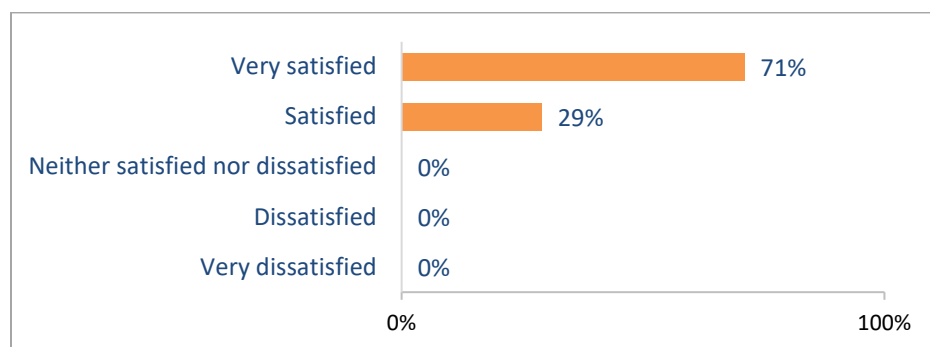
the National Occupational Classification website, industry experience and educator contacts, job descriptions from companies etc. to develop these – and the companies have/are assisting WMC to develop written and video profiles etc. to support the knowledge base that career seekers, industry and educators can use on an on-going basis. This material can be helpful both for industries with relevant transferrable skills and for career seekers in general.

The WMC has been working to develop national occupational profiles for the following occupations: Administration, Design, Management, Procurement, Production and Assembly; Completion, Finishing, Installers, Sales and Marketing, Shipping, Technology & Information Technology.¹⁹

Survey Results

All survey respondents were ‘very satisfied’ or ‘satisfied’ with WMC’s leadership role in the support and development of national standards and HR strategies.

Figure 9: Satisfaction with WMC’s leadership role in the support and development of national standards and HR strategies (n=21)



WMC Competency Standards & Profiles

¹⁹ Logic Model (2023).

The large majority (83%) ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that the WMC is effective in helping developing competency standards and profiles, while 11% were neutral and 6% ‘strongly disagreed’.

Table 5: The WMC is effective in helping developing competency standards and profiles (n=18)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
%	33%	50%	11%	0%	6%

Industry Skills Profiles

Notably, most key informants indicated that they are actively working on creating both written and video profiles in collaboration with companies, showcasing their commitment to enhance the knowledge base for career seekers, industry professionals, and educators. Some key informants indicated that they have drawn upon various sources, including their National Occupational Standards, information from the NOC website, input from industry and educator representatives, and job descriptions from companies.

Having a credential is always useful, but in our sector people can start their careers without a lot of formal education. So many companies can point to how successful those who started without a lot of education has become. We need to highlight these things, get testimonials and hear from these folks, so we can demonstrate what a world of opportunity we can offer.

The sector offers many diverse opportunities from cabinet making to interior design that many may not have awareness. WMC works closely with the hardwood lumber industry, as they are major suppliers of Canadian hardwood to cabinet shops, millwork shops, furniture manufacturers etc. (so partners work across the value chain). Through WMC partners, the sector can expand exposure of the wood manufacturing sector to Canadians – particularly underrepresented groups and those outside the sector with transferable skills. With no credential needed to get started, and companies in almost all Canadian communities, WMC could reach out further and expand the number of those learning about great career opportunities in large and small communities.

Evidence WMC is Effectively Identifying Industry Needs and Best Practices

Responding to Industry Needs

The key industry reps have been bringing the others along for years. It is gratifying to be part of the effort to make our industry known as there are worthy, satisfying and long careers that can come out of our work and we can keep our companies going and growing.

Most key informants found that WMC meets industry needs in the skills matching project.

Many key informants suggest that WMC has undertaken a comprehensive approach to identify industry needs and best practices. Results show the WMC has engaged in collaboration with a diverse set of stakeholders, including companies, sector trade associations, educators, and industry representatives. The project itself includes partners from the sector including the Canadian Kitchen

Cabinet association; Canadian Hardwood Bureau and other sector trade associations and post-secondary institutes with wood processing programs. WMC also consulted with Le Comite Sectorial de main doeuvre (Quebec) for the sector.

Data Limitations

While WMC is very pleased with skills matching and **similarity scores**, they have some concerns around the **desirability scores** as they find OpportuNext does not include the latest labour market information (LMI) for their sector.²⁰ As noted by the Conference Board of Canada (2021), rolling updates are done on an annual basis, but a large part of the data can be outdated. The WMC's LMI has not been updated since 2016 and since then there have been many changes in the industry. They would like to see more updated LMI applied as well as regional data to reflect diverse contexts across the country. A review of documents suggests Canada has very few sources of occupational data, particularly at the regional level.

In addition, key informants find their sector is much more attractive in terms of opportunities overall, and opportunities for diverse target groups, and salary ranges are much higher than is currently reflected on the OpportuNext platform. According to the Conference Board of Canada (2021), data reflect averages across occupations, regardless of geographic location, employing industry, or other unique features of a specific job.²¹

This underscores the need for ongoing collaboration. A few key informants implied that addressing the workforce needs of the wood manufacturing sector requires significant cooperation from government entities at both the Provincial and Federal levels as well as with industry and sector

²⁰ Conference Board of Canada (2021). Modelling Job Transitions in Canada: A primer, p. 15.

²¹ Ibid.

research partners. This suggests that despite progress, there may still be challenges and intricacies in fully meeting the industry's needs, which extend beyond WMC's efforts alone.

Desirability and Identity Factors

Another question relates to data on trajectories and pay scales of underrepresented groups in the sector when looking at projections and desirability. There seems to be some good data on gender, but what about other factors such as immigrant status, race and other factors? As identified in the document review, this is a gap in research and may be of interest in further developing the OpportuNext platform.

4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

Relevance and Continued Need

Rationale: The project is seen as a way to provide much-needed support and effort that companies in Canada's wood manufacturing sector require.

All lines of evidence show a continued need for skills matching and opportunities in the wood manufacturing sector. Businesses in the sector face several HR challenges, including a lack of qualified workers, the need for new workforce skills, difficulty attracting new workers and difficulty replacing retiring workers.

The document review shows the sector faces several barriers to recruitment including a lack of qualified workers and negative (and incorrect) perceptions about the sector in terms of the nature of the work, salary scales and job trajectories.

All key informants agree that companies in the wood manufacturing sector have a need for workers, and in some cases, this need is limiting their ability to take on new work or expand their businesses.

The survey shows the skills matching project is aligned with industry needs. Nearly one-third (32%) of industry partners who responded to the WMC survey identified their firm is not adequately staffed at the lower-skilled worker level, with the same being true for the supervisory level. Moreover, one-half (50%) of industry partners indicated their firm is not adequately staffed at the skilled worker level. Slightly less than half (45%) of survey respondents found that the employee turnover rate within their firm is not currently at an acceptable level.

Given these challenges and goals, all lines of evidence suggest that there is a continued need for this project to bridge gaps in knowledge and awareness of the sector and its needs. Since the WMC no longer receives core federal funding, projects like these are seen by all stakeholder groups to fill a much needed gap in skills matching to recruit job seekers in other sectors and remaining relevant to a changing demographic, particularly job seekers outside the sector and equity groups.

Effectiveness & Immediate Impacts

Effectiveness: Findings show WMC's effectiveness in creating a coordinated approach to HR and promotion.

The document review shows the WMC is an established leader in the sector and its mandate is to bring together key stakeholders to address HR issues. The WMC brings together employers,

employees, education, governments and other interested parties to develop the workforce for Canada's wood manufacturing industry, helping make it more competitive and ensuring long-term growth.¹ This project builds on existing collaborations to fill gaps in knowledge.

All key informants found the project has demonstrated a high level of effectiveness in establishing a coordinated approach to HR and promotion within the woodworking sector. All agreed that the program successfully facilitated collaboration between the WMC and woodworking companies, as well as their trade associations. Additionally, most indicated the project extended its reach beyond the woodworking sector by involving Boards of Education and post-secondary institutions.

The large majority of survey respondents (85%) 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the WMC is effective in helping to develop strategies in recruitment. Almost all survey respondents (91%) 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the WMC is effective in helping industry and their partners share information.

Evidence of the Impact of a National Recruiter

All key informants suggest that the availability of a national recruiter can have a significant impact on raising awareness of careers in the wood sector. All indicated that WMC is playing a key role in advancing this work. WMC is described as the organization taking the lead in recruitment efforts within the sector and there is no duplication of effort.

Recruiting from Industries with Transferable Skills

Many key informants believe the Skills Matching project has been effective in identifying individuals from industries with transferable skills. Key activities cited include skills matching research undertaken in collaboration with the Conference Board, analysis of relevant skills and roles and the development of relevant tools for recruitment.

Key informants with the WMC are very satisfied with the OpportuNext platform and its usefulness in identifying potential matches for careers namely, with similar skill sets requirements, skills etc. that exceed the similarity score of .85. They would like to work more closely with the Conference Board to further refine their matches by narrowing scope and considering desirability. These results feed directly into their targeted marketing and recruitment strategies.

Most key informants suggest the project has been successful in increasing awareness of wood manufacturing jobs and the industry among potential job seekers. The skills matching process has succeeded in broadening the perception of the wood industry, highlighting its sustainability and diverse career opportunities beyond lumber and paper.

Attracting Diverse Target Groups to the Sector

The document review shows WMC has successfully engaged employment agencies, career centres and community groups, who are eager to find opportunities for their constituents and clients. These project partners have helped in the distribution of career awareness materials, welcomed in-person visits to outline wood careers and to recruit their clients into our training programs.

The survey shows a high degree of satisfaction with the brochures and promotional materials (95%). Almost all survey respondents (90%) ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that the WMC is effective in helping developing strategies in career development. Seventy percent of survey respondents ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that the WMC is effective in helping to develop curriculum for training institutions and industry.

Targets for Recruitment

About half (48%) of survey respondents identified their target for recruitment as second career job seekers transitioning into the sector and/or post-secondary students. Fifty-six percent of survey respondents identified their target group(s) as each of an immigrant, refugee, and/or newcomer to Canada, and/or a racialized person/person of color. Slightly fewer respondents (52%) indicated their target group was an Indigenous person. The remaining respondents identified their target group as a member of the LGBTQ2S+ community (40%), a person with a disability (32%), and/or Other (12%).

Most key informants believe WMC has been highly effective in its efforts to make diverse target groups aware of and attract them to opportunities in the wood manufacturing sector.

Most key informants indicated that the WMC has actively engaged with a variety of communities, utilized employment centers, and collaborated with cultural organizations, resulting in wood shops and schools becoming more diverse places. Some key informants note this is particularly notable among newcomers to Canada, who have been reached through employment centers and schools.

However, **some** have said that **the project's impact has been somewhat limited due to its small geographical reach**, with outreach centred primarily in Ontario. Given this project's short duration, it is too early to assess the program's reach in attracting job seekers over time (intermediate outcome, 2-3 years).

Partnerships

Partnerships: The partnerships' effectiveness can be seen in the range of support and collaborations identified. These include feedback, facility access, career information dissemination, and recruitment assistance, all of which indicate that the partnerships are achieving their intended goals.

All key informants highlight the Wood Manufacturing Council's long-standing partnerships and their involvement with key institutions like colleges and universities underscore the effectiveness of their collaboration efforts in the woodworking industry.

Key informants on Industry Needs

Most key informants found that WMC meets industry needs with this skills matching project. Many key informants suggest that WMC has undertaken a comprehensive approach to identify industry needs and best practices. Results show the WMC has engaged in collaboration with a diverse set of

stakeholders, including companies, sector trade associations, educators, and industry representatives. The project itself includes partners from the sector including the Canadian Kitchen Cabinet association; Canadian Hardwood Bureau and other sector trade associations and post-secondary institutes with wood processing programs. WMC also consulted with Le Comite Sectorial de main oeuvre (Quebec) for the sector.

Data Limitations

While key informants are very pleased with **similarity scores** in skills matching, they have some concerns around the **desirability score** as they find OpportuNext does not include the latest labour market information (LMI) for their sector.²²

In addition, key informants find their industry is much more attractive in terms of opportunities for diverse target groups, than is currently reflected on the OpportuNext platform (for example salary ranges). According to the Conference Board of Canada (2021) data reflect averages across occupations, regardless of geographic location, employing industry, or other unique features of a specific job.²³

This underscores the need for ongoing collaboration. A few key informants implied that addressing the workforce needs of the wood manufacturing sector requires significant cooperation from government entities at both the Provincial and Federal levels as well as with industry and sector research partners. This suggests that despite progress, there may still be challenges and intricacies in fully meeting the industry's needs, which extend beyond WMC's efforts alone.

4.2 Recommendations

Recommendations for the Wood Manufacturing Council's Consideration

In terms of recommendations and advice from industry partners and stakeholders regarding promoting careers in a sector with limited barriers to entry and no formal credential requirements, the stakeholder feedback suggests several key strategies. These include highlighting success stories of individuals who have thrived without formal education, gathering testimonials to showcase their achievements, and emphasizing the importance of work ethic and attitude over formal credentials.

Additionally, continuing to target newcomers and similar groups and addressing any misconceptions about the necessity of credentials can further enhance efforts to promote careers in the wood manufacturing sector.

²² Conference Board of Canada (2021). Modelling Job Transitions in Canada: A primer, p. 15.

²³ Ibid.

These recommendations collectively contribute to a more inclusive and accessible approach to career promotion within the sector.

In addition further collaboration with FSC and the Conference Board of Canada is suggested for further advance recruitment goals and fill data gaps.

Recommendations for the Conference Board of Canada's Consideration

The WMC and partner organizations are very satisfied with the OpportuNext platform and its usefulness in identifying potential matches for careers namely, with similar skill sets requirements, skills etc. that exceed the similarity score of 0.85. They would like to work more closely with the Conference Board to further refine their matches by narrowing scope and considering desirability. These results feed directly into their targeted marketing and recruitment strategies.

While very pleased with **similarity scores**, they have some concerns around the **desirability score** as the OpportuNext Platform does not include the latest labour market information (LMI) for their sector.²⁴ They would like to see updated LMI reflected on the desirability scoring.

In addition, they find their sector is much more attractive in terms of opportunities overall, and opportunities for diverse target groups, for example salary ranges are much higher than is currently reflected on the OpportuNext platform. According to the Conference Board of Canada (2021), the data reflects averages across occupations, regardless of geographic location, employing industry, or other unique features of a specific job.²⁵

Desirability and Identity Factors

Another question relates to data on trajectories and pay scales of underrepresented groups in the sector when looking at projections and desirability. There seems to be some good data on gender, but the availability of other factors such as immigrant status, race, etc., is lacking. As identified in the document review, there is a gap in research which may be of interest when further developing the OpportuNext platform.

The WMC would be pleased to meet with the Conference Board of Canada to discuss these areas of mutual interest. Further discussions may include:

- 1) Insights on the effectiveness of the new collateral/marketing material from a “lessons learned” perspective; and,
- 2) How the findings are/will be shared and insights on the most effective ways to share/mobilize the findings.

²⁴ Conference Board of Canada (2021). Modelling Job Transitions in Canada: A primer, p. 15.

²⁵ Conference Board of Canada (2021). Modelling Job Transitions in Canada: A primer, p. 15.

Recommendations for FSC's Consideration

WMC is interested in extending this project another year to focus on additional occupations to do skills matching. Their agreement called for **three (3) occupations** and for the same funds (as budgeted in current contract) they could add **the hardwood lumber industry** into their analysis, as the Conference Board recently sent matching data on **lumber graders**. This would be of value-add for no additional funds.

The rationale is WMC works closely with the industry, as they are major suppliers of **Canadian hardwood to cabinet shops, millwork shops, furniture manufacturers etc. (so they could work across the value chain)**. A one year extension would also allow the WMC to continue to expand the exposure of the wood manufacturing sector to Canadians – and the focus would continue to be with **underrepresented groups**.

5.0 References

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Appendix A: WMC Board Questionnaire

Evaluation of the Skills Matching and Opportunities in Wood Manufacturing Project

WMC Board Questionnaire (Self-administered)

Introduction

The Future Skills Centre (FSC) has contracted Goss Gilroy Inc (GGI), an independent consulting firm, to support their strategic evaluation and learning support initiatives by assisting the Wood Manufacturing Council (WMC) with its evaluation activities. GGI specializes in conducting program evaluations of skills training programs.

As a Board member and/or stakeholder you have been identified by WMC as a key informant for the Skills Matching and Opportunities in Wood Manufacturing Project. This WMC Board questionnaire is self-administered, and we ask that you refer to the attached Logic Model while filling out your responses to the questions below. When completed please return by email to [insert name and email] over the next few weeks [insert date].

Your participation is voluntary. Also, please be assured that any information you provide will remain confidential and will be managed and protected in accordance with the *Privacy Act* to prevent its loss or unauthorized disclosure. The information we gather through this consultation will be summarized in aggregate form.

General

1. Please briefly describe your current role with the WMC? Can you tell us a bit about your involvement in supporting the Skills Matching and Opportunities in Wood Manufacturing Project?

Project Rationale

2. Is there a continued need for the WMC Skills Matching and Opportunities in Wood Manufacturing project?
3. What impact can the availability of a national recruiter have on the awareness of careers in the sector?
 - a. What should be the role of WMC in advancing this work? Is the WMC playing this role? Are other organizations playing this role?

Partnerships

4. To what extent was WMC successful in establishing and developing partnerships with Industry partners; educators (e.g., High school and post-secondary) and employment agencies/career centres?
 - a. How effective are these partnerships?
5. Did this project enable WMC to create a more **coordinated approach** to HR & promotion within/outside the sector?
 - a. Can you provide examples of coordination inside the sector? (For example, with associations and with individual companies on developing materials and delivering materials).
 - b. Can you provide examples outside the sector? (For example, high school events for teachers and for students, career centres and with governments on creating materials and promoting careers).

Effectiveness

6. Did the WMC project effectively identify industry needs and best practices?
 - a. Has this project enabled WMC to develop the skills profile for key roles in the sector (e.g., occupational profiles for industries with relevant transferrable skills)?
7. Has this project **increased awareness** of the attractiveness of wood manufacturing jobs and industry among potential job seekers? If so, how?
 - a. What are the key impacts of this project in terms of skills matching and career awareness efforts?
 - b. Are WMC HR products and services meeting industry needs to reach job seekers outside the sector?
8. Has the Skills Matching project been successful in **targeted recruitment** efforts from industries with transferable skills? What is the demographic and geographic profile of these groups?
9. Has WMC been successful in making **diverse target groups** aware of and attract them to opportunities in the wood manufacturing sector (i.e., under-employed or at-risk of Canadians)?
 - a. What recommendations and advice do you have regarding promoting careers for a sector that has limited barriers to entry and does not require credentials to start careers?
10. Do you have any other comments?

Thank you very much for your participation in this consultation.

Appendix B: WMC Partner Survey

Skills Matching and Opportunities in Wood Manufacturing Project

Wood Manufacturing Council (WMC) Partner Survey

Introduction

Thank you for participating in the Wood Manufacturing Council (WMC) Partner Survey.

The Future Skills Centre (FSC) has contracted Goss Gilroy Inc (GGI), to help WMC evaluate the Skills Matching and Opportunities in Wood Manufacturing Project.

By participating in the survey, you are providing opinions that will help WMC and Future Skills identify key opportunities and anticipate potential future industry challenges for the sector.

The survey is voluntary, and it will take approximately 5 to 10 minutes to complete.

Your privacy is protected

The information collected from this questionnaire will be kept strictly confidential. Your responses will be administered by a third party, GGI, and stored outside of the WMC. Your responses will be handled in accordance with privacy legislation. Your name will not be asked and personal identifiers (for example site location, age, gender) will not be used in any reports. All of the findings will be reported at the aggregate level and will be used only for the purposes described above.

How do I complete the survey?

If you need help filling in the survey, please contact [provide contact name and email]

If you have questions about the Evaluation process, please contact provide [provide contact name and email]

Please complete this survey by [Date].

Section 1: SKILLS MATCHING AND OPPORTUNITIES IN WOOD MANUFACTURING PROJECT EVALUATION QUESTIONS

- **What type of organization do you represent?** (business, non-government organization, government, education/training institution) (note: some survey questions will only apply to businesses)

- What province(s) does your organization serve? (required)
 - [1] Nova Scotia (NS)
 - [2] Newfoundland and Labrador (NL)
 - [3] New Brunswick (NB)
 - [4] Prince Edward Island (PEI)
 - LIST ALL P/Ts, can choose multiple

- To what degree are you familiar with the WMC Skills Matching and Opportunities in Wood Manufacturing Project? (5-point scale)
 - a. To what degree are you satisfied overall with the project?
 - b. To what degree are you satisfied with the WMC Website?
 - c. To what degree are you satisfied with the WMC's brochures and promotional materials?
 - d. To what degree are you satisfied with the WMC's leadership role in the support and development of national standards and HR strategies?

- If dissatisfied with any of the above, please explain.

- To what degree do you agree or disagree with the following statements: (5-point agree-disagree scale):
 - a. Your firm is adequately staffed at the supervisor level
 - b. Your firm is adequately staffed at the skilled worker level
 - c. Your firm is adequately staffed at the lower-skilled worker level
 - d. The employee turnover rate within your firm is at an acceptable level
 - e. The training activities within your firm currently meet your needs
 - f. The recruitment strategies of your firm meet your HR needs
 - g. The education and training institutions in your province provides a sufficient number of graduates for industry needs
 - h. The curricula of the education and training institutions in your province reflects the woodworking industry's practices and needs
 - i. The education and training institutions in your province help meet your HR needs
 - j. The WMC is effective in helping industry and their partners share information
 - k. The WMC is effective in developing useful information for industry
 - l. The WMC is effective in helping developing strategies in training
 - m. The WMC is effective in helping developing strategies in recruitment
 - n. The WMC is effective in helping developing strategies in career development
 - o. The WMC is effective in helping developing curriculum for training institutions and industry
 - p. The WMC is effective in helping developing competency standards and profiles

- If disagreement with any of the above, please explain.

- Does your firm have an HR plan? (i.e., projected HR needs, training plans, recruitment plans, etc.)
- What is the approximate percentage of your employees that have formal education in the area of woodworking?
- Who are your targets for recruitment?
 - [1] Second career job seekers transitioning into the sector
 - [2] Highschool students
 - [3] Postsecondary students
 - [4] Retirees
 - [5] Foreign trained professionals
 - [6] Prefer not to say
 - [7] N/A

Not listed: please specify:
- Who from the following target groups are you seeking to attract to your organization: (check all that apply)
 - [1] An immigrant, refugee and/or newcomer to Canada
 - [2] An Indigenous person
 - [3] A racialized person/person of colour
 - [4] A person with a disability
 - [5] LGBTQ2S+
 - [6] Prefer not to say
 - [7] N/A

Not listed: please specify
- What strategies would you suggest to attract appropriate workers to the sector?
- Do you have any other comments?

Thank you for taking the time to complete the WMC Partner Survey!